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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

NEA FOR FO; NEA/SA/EX FOR AUSTIN-FERGUSON; DEPT FOR
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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PBTS](#) [PHUM](#) [KWBG](#) [KPAL](#) [IS](#) [ASEC](#)

SUBJECT: WB/G SITREP: APRIL 18, 2005 (1800 HOURS LOCAL) --
EIGHT PALESTINIANS ARRESTED IN THE WEST BANK; ONE
PALESTINIAN, ONE IDF SOLDIER WOUNDED IN THE GAZA STRIP.

This is a joint ConGen Jerusalem/Embassy Tel Aviv cable.

1. (SBU) Summary: In the West Bank, a 12-year-old Palestinian boy was wounded by IDF gunfire near Ramallah on April 17. Eight Palestinians were arrested from April 15-17 throughout the West Bank. Two firebombs were thrown at passing Israeli vehicles on road 443 and near Ofra settlement on April 17. In the Gaza Strip, IDF gunfire wounded one Palestinian April 18 north of the Kissufim Crossing, and Palestinian gunfire lightly injured one soldier April 17 west of Khan Yunis. Israeli media reported that thousands of Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails went on a day-long hunger strike April 17. End Summary.

West Bank

2. (SBU) ATTACKS/SECURITY:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injuries: According to Palestinian media, a 12-year-old Palestinian boy was wounded by IDF gunfire near Bayt Liqia village, west of Ramallah, on April 17.

-- Arrests: According to Palestinian sources, IDF troops arrested three wanted Palestinians in Marda village, near Nablus, on April 17. Two of the arrested Palestinians were members of Hamas and one was a member of Fatah.

-- Arrests: According to Palestinian reports, two Hamas activists were arrested by IDF soldiers in Silwad village, north of Ramallah, on April 18.

-- Arrests: According to Palestinian media, IDF soldiers arrested three Palestinian militants in Askar camp in Nablus on April 18.

-- Security Incidents: According to Palestinian sources, Palestinian gunmen opened fire on IDF positions near Jenin on April 17. No injuries were reported.

-- Security Incidents: According to Palestinian media, a firebomb was thrown at passing Israeli vehicles on road 443 and another thrown at an Israeli vehicle near Ofra settlement on April 17. No injuries were reported.

3. (SBU) INCURSIONS/CONFISCATIONS:

-- According to Palestinian sources, the IDF entered Tubas, Tammun, and the village of Faraa,, all in the northern West Bank, on April 15. IDF soldiers set up roadblocks at roads connecting those areas before withdrawing early April 16.

-- According to Palestinian reports, the IDF issued confiscation orders for 90 dunums (approximately 23 acres) of land for military purposes on April 17 in Adasiya village, near Hebron. In addition, confiscation orders for 45 dunums (approximately 12 acres) were issued by the IDF for military purposes in the villages of Bet Ummar and Halhul located close to the settlement of Karnei Tzur, south of Gush Etzion.

Gaza

4. (SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injury/Arrests: The IDF reported that IDF gunfire wounded one Palestinian April 18 north of the Kissufim Crossing, when soldiers opened fire on a group of as many as four Palestinians. UNRWA reported that the Palestinians were arrested subsequently.

-- Injury: The IDF reported that Palestinian gunfire lightly

injured one soldier April 17 west of Khan Yunis (see "Shootings").

-- Mortars/Rockets: The IDF reported that Palestinians militants fired one mortar shell at an IDF outpost west of Khan Yunis April 17, and a second mortar shell towards the settlement of Rafiah Yam April 18. Militants fired one anti-tank rocket at an IDF outpost near Sufa Crossing April 17.

-- Mortars/Rockets: UNRWA reported that militants fired two homemade rockets from Bayt Hanoun towards the green line at midday April 15. The Popular Resistance Committees (PRC) claimed responsibility for the attack.

-- Shootings: According to the IDF, Palestinian militants launched a total of four shooting attacks at IDF and Israeli settler targets April 16-18. One IDF soldier was lightly injured (see "Injury").

-- Explosions: The IDF reported that soldiers discovered and safely detonated two IEDs April 16, one four kilometers south of the Erez Crossing and the other six kilometers south of the Kissufim Crossing.

--Explosion: UNRWA reported that IDF soldiers found and destroyed a tunnel April 16 in Rafah, opposite Bloc J.

-- Explosion: UNRWA reported that unknown individuals detonated a bomb under the vehicle of PA Military Intelligence officer Hajaj al-Sirhi in the early morning hours of April 15. No injuries were reported, but the vehicle was destroyed and several houses in the area were damaged.

15. (SBU) BORDER CROSSINGS:

-- Route Four (Salahadeen Road), the main north-south traffic artery, was open April 16-18, with a major detour at Netzarim Junction.

-- Erez Crossing was open April 15-17, and 2,728 laborers and 210 merchants crossed into Israel April 15. On April 16, 158 laborers and 41 merchants entered Israel, and on April 17, 4,630 laborers and 300 merchants entered.

-- The Erez Industrial Zone was closed April 15-16. On April 17, 652 laborers entered.

-- Sufa Crossing was closed for Palestinian laborers but open for the import of aggregates used in construction April 16-18.

-- Karni Terminal was open April 16-18.

-- Rafah Terminal was open for arrivals and departures April 16-18. Palestinian officials closed Rafah for two hours April 16 in protest against IDF use of security scanning equipment believed by Palestinians to employ unsafe levels of radiation.

-- Tel al-Sultan checkpoint was closed April 16-18. Toufah checkpoint was open for residents of al-Mowassi.

16. (SBU) POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

-- UNRWA reported that thousands of Palestinians, some of them armed and wearing masks, demonstrated throughout the Gaza Strip in commemoration of Prisoners Day, April 17. Israeli media reported that thousands of Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails went on a daylong hunger strike April 17.
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